



United States Attorney's
Office District of Columbia

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PRESS RELEASE

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District Woman Pleads Guilty in Connection

With Shooting Death of Her Husband

WASHINGTON - A 38-year-old District woman, Kristin Kozac, has pled guilty to one count of Voluntary Manslaughter while Armed in connection with the August 10, 2009, shooting death of her 58-year-old husband, Michael Burnette, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced today. Ms. Kozac pled guilty on June 18, 2010, in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, and will be sentenced on June 25, 2010, by the Honorable Lynn Leibovitz. At sentencing, Ms. Kozac faces a possible maximum sentence of 30 years incarceration. Pursuant to the Superior Court guidelines, Ms. Kozac is facing a likely sentence of 8 years in prison.

At the plea hearing, Ms. Kozac admitted that on August 10, 2009, at approximately 6:18P.M., she called 911 and said that she shot her husband, Michael Burnette, at their apartment located at 1503 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E. The police and paramedics arrived at the apartment a few minutes later. Ms. Kozac led them to Mr. Burnette, who was suffering from two gunshot wounds, as well as to a handgun lying on the bed next to Mr. Burnette. Mr. Burnette was transported to Prince George's County Hospital and pronounced dead. Following an autopsy at the Medical Examiner's Office in Baltimore, Maryland, the medical examiners concluded that the cause of death was gunshot wounds to the head and back. They further ruled that the manner of death was a homicide.

Ms. Kozac was arrested on the night of the shooting, waived her rights, and gave a videotaped statement to the police at the police station. In that statement, Ms. Kozac stated that she and her husband got into an argument prior to the shooting. At some point, he got very angry and he appeared to reach for a dresser drawer in the bedroom. Ms. Kozac believed that Mr. Burnette was reaching for a knife or a weapon so she grabbed a gun from the closet and shot Mr. Burnette two times. Ms. Kozac admitted that Mr. Burnette was not armed or trying to attack her at the time of the shooting, though knives were found in the drawer that he was reaching for.

Ms. Kozak also told the police that Mr. Burnette had been physically abusive to her in the past. Ms. Kozak acknowledged that she was under the influence of heroin at the time of the shooting. The autopsy of Mr. Burnette revealed that he was under the influence of cocaine at the time of the shooting.

In announcing the guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Machen commended the work of Metropolitan Police Detectives Jamell Stallings, Anthony Patterson, Douglas Carlson, and Carol Queen of the Violent Crime Branch, along with First District Officers Donald Marshall and Mark Nassar. He also commended Paralegal Specialist Kelly Margaret Blakeney and Victim Witness Advocate Marcey Rinker. Finally, he commended Assistant U.S. Attorney Charles W. Cobb, who investigated and is prosecuting the case.

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